would be to children and parents alike if it were widely understood that some amount of open sexual behaviour, such as masturbation, mutual display and examining of parts, and " rude " talk about the excretory processes, quite normally and generally occurs among children, in the early years. With many children it is kept quite secret and unobserved by grown-ups ; with others, it comes out more into the open. Now, if parents finding this sort of behaviour realise that it is fairly common and ordinary, they are in a much better position to help than if they become terrified and think their children abnormal monsters. Where sexual behaviour is flagrant and persistent in children over five years of age, it is very likely that the children in question do need some special psychological help. But this is not true of occasional though secret sexual play of the same kind, which is quite ordinary and normal in the early years, and may occur with any child. Nor does it need any special attention on the part of the grown-ups. Little more may be required than a deflection of interest to other pursuits, a fuller opportunity for co-operative play in non-sexual directions.

I shall consider these particular issues presently as specific problems. For the moment, I am concerned to draw attention to the fact that the scientific study of children's behaviour and sexual development calls for some measure of modification of our own cultural super-ego. In the light of this knowledge, we ourselves need to re-adjust our standards of what is normal behaviour amongst children, and to build these upon objective reality rather than upon our own personal anxieties. Such a change in the cultural super-ego is actually

taking place. Parents and educationists in general can tolerate a little more of the truth about children's sexual development than they could ten or twenty years ago. We are less likely than we were to think children abhorrent monsters when they masturbate; we are less likely than we were to over-value the too-good child, who never shows any sign of sexual interests or aggressive impulses. And this greater tolerance on our own part is likely to enable us to deal more wisely and patiently with the children's difficulties—quite apart from that question of the unwise attempt to understand their " complexes " in any direct personal way, with which I dealt in the last chapter.